

Message Text

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FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF HIGHLIGHTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE
JANUARY 12 WORKSHOP ON "PROSPECTS FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION"
CHAIRIED BY O'DONOHUE:

1. THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT QUESTION OF REGIONAL
COOPERATION HAD TO BE DIFFERENTIATED. FOR SOME COUNTRIES
AND EMBASSIES, NARCOTICS WAS NOT A MAJOR PROBLEM AREA IN
THE SAME WAY THAT IT FIGURED IN THE SOUTH EAST ASIAN CONTEXT.
CONSEQUENTLY, IT WAS BELIEVED THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO FOCUS
ON REGIONAL COOPERATION AT TWO LEVELS. OVERALL IN THE EAST ASIA
AND PACIFIC AREA THE VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ENTITIES.
ALREADY ESTATE HAVE LED TO CONTACTS AND PERSONAL RELATION-
SHIPS BETWEEN LEADING ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WHICH APPEAR
ADEQUATE. AT THE SAME TIME THE WORKSHOP NOTED THAT THE
QUESTION OF REGIONAL OR SUBREGIONAL COOPERATION IN THOSE
COUNTRIES IN WHICH NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING IS A MAJOR
INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM IS OF ANOTHER DIMENSION AND HAS TO
BE ADDRESSED SEPARATELY.

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2. IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH EAST ASIA, THE WORKSHOP'S
VIEW WAS THAT THE ASEAN COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE
DEEPLY INVOLVED IN COMBATING NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING
(THAILAND, MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE), HAVE ALREADY DEVELOPED
CLOSE PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE LAW EN-
FORCEMENT FIELD. PARTIALLY BY GEOGRAPHICAL PROXIMITY

AND PARTIALLY THROUGH THE WIDE RANGE OF SUBREGIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMS, LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS IN THESE COUNTRIES ARE WELL KNOWN TO EACH OTHER AND, DESPITE SIGNIFICANT INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS, (E.G., CORRUPTION), THERE IS AN INCREASING AWARENESS BY ASEAN ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS OF THE NEED FOR COOPERATION.

3. THE WORKSHOP BELIEVED THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT INITIATIVES IN THE ASEAN CONTEXT TO FURTHER COOPERATION, FOCUSING ALSO ON NON-LAW ENFORCEMENT AREAS SINCE, AS NOTED ABOVE, THERE ALREADY APPEAR TO BE SUFFICIENT INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS AS WELL AS A HIGH DEGREE OF PERSONAL CONTACT ALREADY EXISTING BETWEEN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.

4. ONE MAJOR PROBLEM AREA IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF BURMA TO ITS NEIGHBORS AND ASEAN. WHILE THIS FOCUSES MOST SIGNIFICANTLY ON BI-LATERAL THAI-BURMA RELATIONS, THE WORKSHOP VIEWED IT AS DESIRABLE TO CONSIDER MECHANISMS OR INITIATIVES WHICH COULD BRING BURMA INTO GREATER CONTACT WITH ITS ASEAN NEIGHBORS IN THE NARCOTICS FIELD. IT WAS RECOGNIZED THAT BURMA WOULD NOT WISH TO PARTICIPATE OR BE INVOLVED IN ANY REGIONAL MEETINGS WHICH APPEARED TO BE UNDER THE AEGIS OF ASEAN OR LOCATED IN THAILAND. HOWEVER, THE WORKSHOP BELIEVED THAT CONSIDERATION MIGHT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BE GIVEN TO SOME NON-ASEAN REGIONAL OR SUBREGIONAL INITIATIVE, PERHAPS FROM THE U.N. OR POSSIBLY USING MALAYSIA'S RELATIVELY BETTER BI-LATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH BURMA, WHICH WOULD ENCOURAGE THE BURMESE TO PARTICIPATE IN REGIONAL MEETINGS, INITIALLY ON LESS SENSITIVE NARCOTICS RELATED AREAS AS DEMAND REDUCTION OR EDUCATION.

5. BEYOND THE SOUTH EAST ASIA CONTEXT, THERE WAS A GENERAL VIEW THAT PARTICULAR ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE ROLE OF ACETIC ANHYDRIDE, PARTICULARLY THE QUESTION OF TIGHTER CONTROLS ON SHIPMENTS FROM JAPAN.

6. OVERALL, THE WORKSHOP BELIEVED THAT US SUPPORT HAS BEEN A CRUCIAL ELEMENT IN THE OVERALL REGIONAL COOPERATION WHICH HAS TO DATE BEEN ESTABLISHED.

7. IN PRACTICAL TERMS THE PANEL CONSENSUS WAS THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT SHORTFALLS IN COOPERATION WERE IN THE BI-LATERAL CONTEXT, PARTICULARLY IN THAI-BURMESE RELATIONS AND THAI-MALAYSIAN COOPERATIVE EFFORTS ALONG THE BORDER. IN BOTH CASES, ALTHOUGH THE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE NOT THE SAME, THE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED ARE LESS

SUSCEPTABLE TO BROADER REGIONAL INITIATIVES,
BUT MUST BE ADDRESSED PRIMARILY IN TERMS OF THE
COUNTRIES THEMSELVES.

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